EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds:
Special Protection Area (SPA)

Name: Dorset Heathlands

Unitary Authority/County: Dorset County Council, Hampshire County Council, Poole Borough Unitary Authority and Bournemouth Unitary Authority.

Consultation proposal: The Dorset Heathlands comprises a suite of heathland sites at the western edge of the Hampshire Basin. The SPA encompasses the fragmented remains of once extensive tracts of dry heath, wet heath and valley mire which were originally only divided by river valleys, and extend across the sands, gravels, clays and peatlands of this area. The 40 SSSIs listed on page 2 have been recommended as a Special Protection Area because of the European ornithological importance of the area.

Status: SPA classified on 1st October 1998.

Boundary of SPA: SPA boundary is coincident with the following SSSI boundaries; Blackhill Heath, Brenscombe Heaths, Ebblake Bog, Hartland Moor, Lions Hill, Oakers Bog, Town Common, Turners Puddle Heath, and Worgret Heath. The remaining SPA boundary includes parts of the other 31 SSSIs listed on page 2. See SPA map for further clarification.

European ornithological importance of the SPA

Dorset Heathlands SPA is of European importance because:

a) The site qualifies under article 4.1 of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of 5 species listed in Annex 1 in any season:

Annex 1 species	Estimated population	% GB	Date of survey
Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata*	418-606 pairs	37.9 % GB*	1991/92 & 1994
Nightjar *Caprimulgus europeaus*	436+ pairs	12.8 % GB	1991/92
Woodlark *Lullula arborea*	41-56 pairs	9.3 % GB*	1991/92 & 1994
Hen harrier *Circus cyaneus*	20[1]	3.2 % GB	1991/92
Merlin *Falco columbarius*	15[1]	1.2 % GB	1991/92

[1] = Individuals

*the GB % for these two species are based on the 1994 national population and are therefore only applied to the 1994 survey figures.

Dartford warbler and woodlark figures from: RSPB, 1994. 1994 *Dartford warbler/woodlark survey*. Unpublished report. RSPB. Sandy.

RSPB, Dorset Bird Club & Nature Conservancy Council for England records 1991-1992.

Russell, T.A. 1991. Survey of rare birds on heathland SSSI's. Nature Conservancy for England, Dorset.

Nightjar figures from: BTO/RSPB, 1992. *Nightjar data set 1992*. Unpublished report.

RSPB, Dorset Bird Club & Nature Conservancy Council for England records 1991-1992.

Russell, T.A. 1991. Survey of rare birds on heathland SSSI's. Nature Conservancy for England, Dorset.

Hen Harrier and merlin figures from: RSPB, Dorset Bird Club & Nature Conservancy Council for England records 1991-1992.

Component SSSIs within the SPA boundary: The following SSSIs are include, either wholly or in part, in the Dorset Heathlands SPA

Arne SSSI
Blackhill Heath SSSI
Blue Pool & Norden Heaths SSSI
Bourne Valley SSSI
Brenscombe Heaths SSSI
Canford Heath SSSI
Christchurch Harbour SSSI
Corfe & Barrow Hills SSSI
Cranborne Common SSSI
Ebblake Bog SSSI
Ferndown Common SSSI
Ham Common SSSI
Hartland Moor SSSI
Holt & West Moors Heaths SSSI
Holton and Sandford Heaths SSSI
Horton Common SSSI
Hurn Common SSSI
Lions Hill SSSI
Matchams SSSI
Morden Bog & Hyde Heaths SSSI
Norden SSSI
Oakers Bog SSSI
Parley Common SSSI
Poole Harbour SSSI
Povington & Grange Heaths SSSI
Rempstone Heaths SSSI
Slop Bog & Uddens Heaths SSSI
Stoborough & Creech Heaths SSSI
Stokeford Heaths SSSI
Studland & Godlingston Heaths SSSI
Thrashers Heath SSSI
The Moors SSSI
Town Common SSSI
Turbary & Kinson Commons SSSI
Turners Puddle Heath SSSI
Upton Heath SSSI
Verwood Heaths SSSI
Warmwell Heath SSSI
Winfrith Heath SSSI
Worgret Heath SSSI